

# Traces of Jewish life in Porto, Portugal



After lunch time, the afternoon was spent at the faculty of Law (Porto University). In there, the group was welcomed by its president and guided till the old library and later to an auditorium. The professors Anabela Leão and Rute Pedro did a lecture about “Traces of Jewish life in [Portuguese] law” with a debate at the end. At the closure, the theatre group of the faculty presented to the participants dramatized reading of Jewish authors.



At the faculty of Law (Porto University)

10/12

On Thursday, the day was spent in Belmonte, a small Jewish town that survived through the ages withstanding all threats against the Jewish community. In Belmonte, we visited the Jewish quarter and the Jewish museum. During the visit, we had the company and guiding of a representative from the city hall and the person responsible for the Jewish community, who spoke openly about the history of the Jews from Belmonte. At the synagogue, we were welcomed by the rabbi, who very lively and clearly explained the history, the path and the goals followed by the Jews in Portugal and all around the world. He also explained that many descendants of Portuguese Jews are now searching for their origins and wanting to understand better their lost culture and that some of them have begun the process of conversion back to Judaism. In the afternoon, we visited the Jewish quarter from Caria – a village near Belmonte -, where we found significant traces of the old Jewish life in the region, namely in marks engraved on stone dwellings. We were informed that increasingly important vestiges of Jewish presence are found in the region highlighting the importance of the community in history.



At the Jewish quarter, Belmonte



At the synagogue



Marks engraved on stone dwellings



11/12

On Friday, the morning was spent at school. All the students had the opportunity to integrate in classes, where Portuguese teachers and students prepared study activities related to the subject of the lesson. Meanwhile, teachers were having their final meeting to evaluate the week and prepare the next mobility.

The day was also dedicated to the presentation of the final works of each group: the group videos. The results were positive and different, ranging from humorous nature videos to other more journalistic versions of a summary of the week in Porto. After a lunch together in a typical restaurant along Douro river, the group took a boat ride, discovering the magnificent scenery of the Old Town and learning a little more about its history and its bridges. In the evening, teachers and students had their goodbye dinner and left Porto on the next day.